

Jeff Koenings - question from one interested in collaborative conservation

To: <director@dfw.wa.gov>
Date: 04/18/2003 5:27 PM
Subject: question from one interested in collaborative conservation

Director Koenings-

I thoroughly enjoyed the talk you gave Wednesday afternoon at the meeting of the Washington Chapter of The Wildlife Society. The message you conveyed about the importance of collaborative conservation and the need of future biologists to be trained with it in mind, helped me reaffirm that I have chosen a pertinent combination of studies for my undergraduate education (a combination of biology, policy and communications).

It is my opinion that the future of wildlife stewardship will increasingly require a sound biological background, an understanding of the politics of place (be it at the community, county or state level), and the willingness on part of biologists to work with community-members for the benefit of our state's wildlife. Numerous socio-economic factors, local culture and the history of community member interactions with government agency representatives plays importantly into the dynamic relationship of biologists with stake-holders. While fostering these relationships can be challenging, good biologists who are also skilled communicators have the ability to build mutual tolerance and respect between their peers and community members. This is a key link to achieving the best possible outcomes for people and for wildlife. Biologists with these skills are invaluable to their agency, the community and above all, wildlife.

The question I would like to ask you is this:

What steps would you recommend to a soon-to-be college graduate take, if he/she wants to pursue experience working in a state natural resource agency and is interested in wildlife research and collaborative conservation?

I had hoped to ask you this question during the plenary session break, but was unable to do so.

Thank you so much for the inspiring message and for taking the time to offer information and/or recommendations of individuals to speak with about working towards collaborative conservation.

Sincerely,
Lindsay Malone